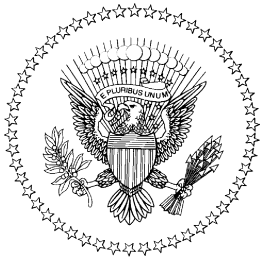


Weekly Compilation of  
**Presidential  
Documents**



Monday, March 19, 2001  
Volume 37—Number 11  
Pages 431–461

## Contents

### Addresses and Remarks

*See also* Bill Signings; Meetings With Foreign Leaders

#### Florida

Tyndall Air Force Base in Panama City

Arrival—435

Tour of Senior Airman Donnie Bryant's home—436

Youth Activities Center—437

Rotary Club and Chamber of Commerce in Panama City—438

Louisiana, remarks in Lafayette—431

#### New Jersey

New Jersey Chamber of Commerce in East Brunswick—447

Tour of the Youth Entertainment Academy in Plainfield—445

Radio address—435

Small-business owners—455

Saint Patrick's Day

Reception—453

Shamrock presentation ceremony—453

### Bill Signings

John Joseph Moakley U.S. Courthouse, remarks—442

### Communications to Congress

Campaign finance reform legislation, letter—452

Iran, messages on continuation of national emergency—443, 444

Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change, letter—444

### Interviews With the News Media

Exchanges with reporters

Plainfield, NJ—445

South Lawn—451

Tyndall Air Force Base, FL—436

### Letters and Messages

Saint Patrick's Day, message—454

### Meetings With Foreign Leaders

Ireland, Prime Minister Ahern—453

United Kingdom

Northern Ireland Executive

Deputy First Minister Mallon—453

First Minister Trimble—453

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland

Reid—453

### Notices

Continuation of Iran Emergency—443

### Proclamations

National Girl Scout Week—458

### Supplementary Materials

Acts approved by the President—461

Checklist of White House press releases—460

Digest of other White House

announcements—459

Nominations submitted to the Senate—460

**Editor's Note:** The Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents is also available on the Internet on the *GPO Access* service at <http://www.gpo.gov/nara/nara003.html>.

## WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

## PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

Published every Monday by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408, the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* contains statements, messages, and other Presidential materials released by the White House during the preceding week.

The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* is published pursuant to the authority contained in the Federal Register Act (49 Stat. 500, as amended; 44 U.S.C. Ch. 15), under

regulations prescribed by the Administrative Committee of the Federal Register, approved by the President (37 FR 23607; 1 CFR Part 10).

Distribution is made only by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* will be furnished by mail to domestic subscribers for \$80.00 per year (\$137.00 for mailing first class) and to foreign subscribers for \$93.75 per year, payable to the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The charge for a single copy is \$3.00 (\$3.75 for foreign mailing).

There are no restrictions on the republication of material appearing in the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*.

Week Ending Friday, March 16, 2001

**Remarks in Lafayette, Louisiana**

*March 9, 2001*

**The President.** Thank you all very much. I'm sure glad I came here to Louisiana. Thank you for coming. I want to thank you all for coming. I want to thank the thousands of people who lined the road on the way in here. I wish the hangar were 10 times bigger, but thank you all so much for being here.

First, I want to thank my friend and your Governor, Mike Foster. I appreciate his friendship. One thing you can say about him is, you know where he stands. And I know he stands as my friend, and I appreciate that so very much.

I appreciate John Cooksey, the Congressman who is here. I appreciate Susie Terrell, who is here. I want to thank Senator Michot for being here. Ernie Alexander, my friend, is here; I want to thank him. My friend Ernest Johnson, who heads the Louisiana NAACP, is with us today, and I want to thank you, Ernest, for coming.

There is one other fellow, a man who stuck his neck out in the course of the campaign. You see, he doesn't happen to have the Republican label by his name. His name is Dan Morrish. He's a Democrat. He put party aside and did what he thought was right for the country. And Dan, I'm honored to have your support. I thank you for your friendship.

And it's great to be here. I tell you, it is important for me to make sure I get outside the Nation's Capital on a regular basis. I love people in Louisiana. I like the idea of coming to bring my message to you. I hope by now the people of the country are beginning to realize that we all have adopted a common-sense message. It's a message of the people. It's a message that understands that the most important element of politics are the people of this country, the hard-working Americans who make the country go.

I get to propose things in Washington. I don't get to vote on them. I'm not a member

of the legislative branch. But the biggest influence in our Government is the people, and I know that. So I'm here today in Lafayette, Louisiana, to explain a commonsense budget. And if you like what you hear, you might decide to maybe e-mail or call some of those who represent you and let them hear from you. If you like the commonsense approach to how we spend your money, it may make sense to pick up the phone or drop a note to people who may not see it our way. That's what politics is all about, as far as I'm concerned; it's the people's will. And I'm here to talk about the people's business. And the people's business is to bring some fiscal sanity to the budgeting process in Washington, DC.

It starts with understanding this important principle, that the surplus is not the Government's money; the surplus is the people's money. And so what makes sense? Well, what makes sense is to set priorities. That's what makes sense. Here's some of my priorities. Education is a priority; making sure children learn is a priority. So we increase spending at the Education Department. It's a priority of the country, but in case you might think that I forgot where I came from, I'll understand that the people who can run the schools best in Louisiana are not people in Washington, DC, but the folks of Louisiana. So we're spending a little more at the Federal level, but we're going to work with Congress to pass power out of Washington to empower the local folks, to empower parents and teachers to make the right decision for the children of the great State of Louisiana.

The people's health is a priority. Today I talked about expanding a number of community health centers around America to make sure that the poor are able to get primary care. I also want to make it crystal clear in the budget I submitted to the Congress that we have doubled Medicare spending over a 10-year period of time, that we're going to make the commitment that we have made

to the elderly. It not only requires more spending, which we will do; it also requires an attitude of reform that says we'll trust seniors—to make choices for themselves—seniors—to match their needs with a variety of programs, all of which include prescription drugs.

And I want to praise one of your Senators from Louisiana. John Breaux and I are going to work on this issue. We will spend a lot of time making sure that Medicare is properly reformed so that the promise we have made to our seniors will be a promise that will be kept.

There's a lot of talk about Social Security, as there should be. The message to the Congress is loud and clear: We're not going to spend payroll taxes on anything other than Social Security; we're not going to take the money aimed for Social Security and spend it on anything else.

There's money in my budget to make sure that we're able to keep the peace by making sure we pay our military folks a good wage. There's money in the budget for priorities. As a matter of fact, we increased what's called the discretionary spending by 4 percent. That's greater than the rate of inflation.

But it's not enough for some in Washington, because, you see, they're used to spending a lot of money up there. The last session, they spent your money to the tune of 8 percent. It's like they had a bidding contest to see who could get out of town. Those days are over with.

We will set priorities and fund them. But we'll be wise about how we spend your money. We don't want the Federal Government exploding in growth. We want the Federal Government to be lean and efficient and focused with your money. And that's exactly what's going to happen with new leadership in Washington.

There's a lot of discussion about paying down debt. I want to remind you, there are two types of debt—there are a lot of types of debt—but there are two types of debt that I worry about. One is debt at the national level. And under the plan I submitted to the Congress, we pay down \$2 trillion in national debt over 10 years—\$2 trillion. It's the biggest amount of debt repayment ever. There's also consumer debt, the credit card debt that

burdens many of the working families in America. Yes, we talk about national debt, and we're paying a lot down. But you're fixing to hear me tell you, part of the remedy for people who have got a lot of credit card debt is to make sure people get some of their own money back.

We have met priorities. We grew the budget at a reasonable rate, not this fantastic rate that exploded during the last session. We pay down debt. We protected Social Security. We have also set aside one trillion over 10 years for contingencies.

Who knows what will happen. And so, we put one trillion aside. That makes sense. That's common sense to do that, it seems like, to me. We may need money for our farmers. And I'm going to tell you something about agriculture in America. It is an incredibly important part of our economy. Who knows what we'll need money for.

So we set aside money to do so but, guess what? There's still money left over. The fundamental question is: What do we do with that money? The fundamental question that I want Congress to hear from you about is, what to do with the money? Do we increase the size and scope of the Federal Government?

**Audience members.** No-o-o!

**The President.** Or do we trust you with your own money?

**Audience members.** Yes!

**The President.** There's a lot of discussion about how to get tax relief. I worry about what's called targeted tax cuts. I worry about people sitting around Washington saying, "You're targeted in, but oh, by the way, you're targeted out." It seems like, to me, the fairest way to handle the people's money is to say that everybody who pays taxes ought to get relief. The Federal Government ought not to try to play favorites. It's likely people in Louisiana may not be considered a favorite. You will be, as far as this President is concerned.

So the plan that was passed out of the House—and John, thank you for your support—is fair. It reduces all rates on everybody that pays taxes, and it simplifies the code. It drops the bottom rate from 15 percent to 10 percent. It increases the child credit from \$500 to \$1,000 per child. And

let me explain to you why. Let me explain to you why this Tax Code we have is unfair.

One of the things that the people must stand for is fairness in life. If you're a single mother in the State of Louisiana trying to raise two children, and you're making 20-something thousand dollars a year, under the code that's written today, for every dollar you earn above \$22,000, you pay a higher marginal rate on that dollar than someone who is successful. You pay nearly 50 percent on that dollar, and that's not right. And that's not what America is all about.

Now, this country stands for rewarding hard work, not penalizing it. And we must understand and—when we find people working the hardest job in America, which is the single moms in this country, and they're struggling to get ahead, we ought to have a Tax Code that welcomes hard work and says, "You can access the middle class, and you can realize your dreams."

This plan that passed the House yesterday makes this code imminently more fair. It also reduces the top rate. And oh, I know there's a lot of discussion about that, dropping the top rate, but let me tell you why. First, there ought to be some principle involved in the Tax Code. And this principle is, the Federal Government ought to take no more than a third of anybody's check.

But there's another principle. And that is, our Nation must understand that the small-business man and the small-business woman is the backbone of job creation. Our Nation must never forget—we must never forget that good public policy will encourage entrepreneurial spirit in America, encourage the growth of the small-business owner.

And we must also realize that many small businesses are unincorporated; they're sole proprietorships. They're Subchapter S's. They pay the high marginal rate. And by cutting the rates from 39.6 percent to 33 percent, we send a clear signal that we encourage entrepreneurship and small-business growth, that we understand—that we send a loud message to Washington that the role of Government is not to create wealth, but the role of Government is to create an environment in which American risk takers and dreamers and people willing to work for a

dream have got a better opportunity to realize those dreams.

The plan that we've submitted to the United States Congress recognizes that the death tax is unfair to Louisiana farmers and small-business owners, and we need to get rid of the death tax. The plan that I submitted to the United States Congress recognizes that when you penalize marriage, we send a bad signal about families and the role of families in our society. We've submitted a good plan, and it's working its way through the system.

It came—a major portion came out of the House, and I want to thank the 10 Democrats that stood with 100 percent of the Republicans that spoke on your behalf. And now it's headed to the Senate, and it's time for your voices to be heard.

Now, I want to give you some ammunition if you agree with what I'm saying. Not only have we got a commonsense budget—in other words, we can afford what I'm telling you; we can afford it—but that makes economic sense to give people their own money back. You see, our economy is beginning to sputter a little bit. There are some places around the country where people are beginning to get laid off; economic growth is slowing down. It is important to act quickly to get people their own money back, so you can spend it and serve as a second wind for our economy. It makes sense—it makes sense. We need it now. And so I appreciate the fact that the plan that came out of the House will make some of the tax cut retroactive, which means when it passes, it's as if it took effect on January of this year.

But there's another reason why this tax plan is important—because it sends a signal about the priorities of our Government, and the priorities of our Government is to trust people with their own money. We must send a clear message that once we meet our priorities, the people who can best handle the people's money is the people, themselves.

Today I've asked the Anderson family to join us here from Lafayette. We've got Richard and Jenifer—and first, I want to say they're teachers, and you can't thank teachers enough for being a teacher. And with Richard and Jenifer are Jane, Noah, and Sam,

their three children, who they love more than life.

And the reason I've asked them to join us is to help make my point, that when we're talking about taxes and budgets, it's more than numbers that we're talking about. We're talking about people's lives. We're talking about the fact that this is a plan that understands that there are a lot of folks working hard to get ahead.

Remember, we haven't had an energy policy for a while. And anybody that understands that is the people of this part of the world. There's a lot of people paying high energy bills in America now. It's like a new tax on American families. By the way, we're going to have an energy policy, and it starts with finding more energy here in America.

But I'm worried about hard-working folks like the Andersons. I'm worried about the fact that people all across America are paying high energy bills. I'm worried about the fact that a lot of folks have got credit card debt. I'm worried about the folks—the fact that folks are working longer hours. And it seems like, to me, that if you've got a little extra money in Washington, instead of spending it on programs, why don't we let people spend their own money.

And so, here are the facts—here are the facts. These good folks now pay \$4,300 in Federal income taxes on an annual basis. Under our plan, they will save \$2,600. Oh, that may not sound like a lot to some. It's a lot to me, and it's a lot to the Andersons.

You see, the principle is, do we want that \$2,600 that's their money to begin with to go to excess Federal spending, or do we think it's better spent by them? Would we rather have the Government spend it, or would we rather have it for them to save for their children, to meet their priorities?

I want to tell you what a grandmother said the other day in Council Bluffs, Iowa. You see, I've been moving around the country, making our case. And she said, she's had a lot of children and grandchildren go through her house, and when you bake cookies and you leave them on the table, sure enough, they'll be eaten. [*Laughter*] That's kind of how I view that \$2,600. If you leave it on the table, sure enough, it will be spent.

The right thing to do, the fair thing to do, the thing to do that's based upon common sense, is to understand whose money it is to begin with and to trust the good people of America to spend their own money to meet their own priorities.

I have great trust in the American people. I can't tell you what an honor it is to be your President and to travel our land and to see people come out and wave. It reinvigorates my spirit, because it helps me understand, yet again, the spirit of America. The true greatness of this country does not lie in the halls of our governments; the true greatness of our country lies in the hearts and souls of the American people.

My job is to represent the folks in Washington and to fight for sound budgets and tax relief. But my job also is to call upon the spirit of this country, is to say to the moms and dads of America, "Your most important job is to love your children with all your heart and all your soul." It's to thank the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts and Boys and Girls Club leaders who are teaching our children commonsense values, the difference between right and wrong. It's to thank those folks who, when they see a neighbor in need, put their arm around them and say, "What can I do to help you, brother or sister? What can I do to help you on your walk?"

No, the greatness of America is our people. It's important to trust the people. It's important to trust the people with their own money. But it's also important for our President to understand that by rallying the spirit of America, we can trust the people to make America a compassionate, decent place for all of us who are fortunate enough to live in this land.

I'm proud to be your President. Thank you for coming. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:30 p.m. in a hangar at Lafayette Regional Airport. In his remarks, he referred to State Senator Michael J. Michot; State Representatives Ernie Alexander and Dan W. "Blade" Morrish; and Suzanne Haik Terrell, commissioner, Louisiana Department of Elections and Registration. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

## **The President's Radio Address**

*March 10, 2001*

Good morning. On Thursday the House of Representatives voted in favor of my tax relief plan, a large step toward the first broad tax reductions in a generation. The House approved the toughest part of my package to get passed, reduced tax rates, with the support of several Democrats.

We have made a good start, with the help of a lot of Americans who contacted their Members of Congress. Thank you all so very much. Support for tax relief is building. Now I urge the Senate to move quickly, also.

Our economy is sputtering. Economic growth has been stalled. Consumer confidence is falling. We can't just stand by and hope for the best. We must act and act now to get ahead of this problem and blunt or reverse this slowdown. And the best way to respond is to get more money into the hands of Americans, who will buy products and build businesses and create jobs. We must put more fuel into the engine of this economy, and that's what my tax relief package will do.

My overall budget plan funds important priorities like education. It pays down our national debt at a record rate. It sets aside nearly a trillion dollars in a contingency fund for future needs and emergencies. And we still have surplus money left over for broad, fair, responsible tax relief.

High tax rates punish hard work and enterprise, values America has always tried to reward. And high tax rates are particularly damaging during an economic slowdown. They act like an anchor on the economy, a drag on economic growth. High tax rates can make a downturn deeper; they can make a slowdown longer. A time of economic stagnation is exactly the moment when tax relief is most urgent.

Not long ago, the Chairman of the Federal Reserve testified before Congress that tax relief in the past has often come too late to boost the economy. This is why I support making tax relief retroactive, meaning the new lower rates will take effect as of 3 months ago, on January 1st of this year. And that is why I'm asking Congress to act as soon as possible.

There's another reason to act quickly, because many families need some help right away. A lot of Americans are struggling with debt and some have borrowed against their homes to repay it. These families could certainly use extra money—money that my tax relief plan will offer. Other families will buy some things they need or save for college or retirement.

Tax relief is good for our economy precisely because it is good for American families. When millions of families have some extra money to save and spend, it helps kick-start our economic growth. When families are more confident about the economic future, that future gets brighter for us all.

I feel the momentum for tax relief everywhere I travel in this country. Americans know our economy needs some immediate help. Americans know they are overtaxed and overcharged by their Government, and Americans are ready for a refund. For all these reasons I urge the Congress to deliver tax relief now. And I hope you will urge them to do the same.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 1:05 p.m. on March 8 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on March 10. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 8 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

## **Remarks on Arrival at Tyndall Air Force Base in Panama City, Florida**

*March 12, 2001*

Well, thank you all very much. General Ryan, thank you for your hospitality. I want to thank your base commander. I want to thank the command sergeant who greeted me at the stairs of the Air Force plane that flew me here. The good news is, those pilots know what they're doing.

It is such an honor to be the Commander in Chief of the greatest Nation on the face of the Earth. I'm proud of the men and women who wear our uniform. My job is to set a clear mission for the United States military. The mission of the military would be to be well prepared to fight and win war and,

therefore, prevent war from happening in the first place.

Today I'm going to speak to a Rotary Club and chamber of commerce event that will detail parts of my budget that I submitted to the Congress. One part of my budget that I submitted to the Congress will be to make sure we house our military folks better.

One part of the budget I submitted to Congress is a pay raise for those who wear the uniform. I believe by focusing our mission, we can improve morale. But I know by paying folks more we can improve morale, as well.

I look forward to shaking your hands and looking you in the eye and thanking you for serving America. For those of you who I don't get to look in the eye and say, thanks for serving America: Thanks for serving America. We're counting on you. Our Nation relies upon you to keep the peace, and we will do so.

God bless you all, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:20 a.m. on the tarmac. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Michael E. Ryan, USAF, Chief of Staff; and Brig. Gen. William F. Hodgkins, USAF, commander, and M. Sgt. Karl W. Meyers, USAF, commander chief, 325th Fighter Wing.

### Remarks During a Tour of Senior Airman Donnie Bryant's Home and an Exchange With Reporters at Tyndall Air Force Base

March 12, 2001

**The President.** Donnie, thanks for having us—me, my brother, and about 400 other people in your living room.

**Airman Bryant.** I think this is the most I've ever had in my living room, sir.

**The President.** Well, there are some fine Americans in your living room.

**Airman Bryant.** Yes, sir.

**The President.** Thanks for having us.

**Airman Bryant.** Yes, sir.

**The President.** So, tell us about housing here.

**Airman Bryant.** Housing—we just recently have completed our Redfish Point housing, which is the housing right behind my house over here, the new housing. I think

you may get a chance to drive by and see it.

**The President.** Right, we are.

**Airman Bryant.** This is the older housing. It's about 50 years old, built to the standards at the time. And these houses are totally being refurbished. We have kitchens being redone in them. The electric and all the plumbing and stuff, some of that's been taken care of. The outside electric has been put to an underground system instead of the overhead wiring that we had for a long time, that actually goes into the house. It saves a lot of problems with power problems around the house. We still have a few problems with plumbing, but I believe they are starting a project on that. We've had some plumbers pull in out back. But overall—

**The President.** Particularly after they knew General Ryan was coming.

**Airman Bryant.** Cleaned it up for you, Mr. President.

But the main thing is, I guess we're trying to keep all the houses, the old houses up to par and keep everything maintained and keep the housing conditions livable.

**The President.** That's my mission, as well.

**Airman Bryant.** That's where we need our money, to keep projects going and to also make room for new houses and stuff, as well.

**The President.** That's one of the reasons I've come to your house, to highlight my initiative that I look forward to working with the Air Force on, and base commanders all around the country, to refurbish housing and build new housing. I do think we need for a troop to be able to house his family; that's an important part of building morale in the military.

**Airman Bryant.** Yes, sir. It is.

**The President.** Thank you for letting us come by.

**Airman Bryant.** Thank you, sir, for coming by.

**The President.** We want Chloe to have a good roof over her.

**Theresa Bryant.** Would you like to see her room?

**The President.** Sure. Chloe, would you show me your room?

**Airman Bryant.** Mr. President, I'll show you back there.



**The President.** Is everybody going in there? *[Laughter]*

*[At this point, the President toured the house and then took questions from the press.]*

### **Tax Cut Legislation**

**Q.** Can I ask you your response to all those Senators that are saying they expect you to compromise on your tax cut plan?

**The President.** Well, there's 100 opinions in the United States Senate, and I respect every opinion, but when they listen to what the American people want, they're going to find out people want something, they want a tax relief that's substantial and real. And I look forward to working with the Senate.

**Q.** Does that mean you are or are not willing to compromise, sir?

**The President.** I'm willing to listen to the 100 different voices who've got different views about where this package ought to go. And of course, I'm pleased with what happened in the House. And as I've said all along, I laid out a plan that I thought was the right size to begin with, and look forward to working with the Members to get this done. And we need to do it in a quick way in order to provide a little second wind to the economy.

**Q.** What about Democrats running ads in the State against your tax package but wrapping that issue around the issue of the Florida recount, saying your brother delivered this State, and now look at what we're getting?

**The President.** Some of the Democrats here want to keep revoting the election. But if they would listen to America, they would find that Americans want to move forward. Secondly, there are some who would rather spend the surplus on bigger Government. And I have an honest disagreement with those types of people.

The American people, when they hear that we've got enough money to meet needs such as building housing on military bases or refurbishing housing on military bases, if we set priorities and have fiscally sound leadership in Washington, DC, they will find that there is enough money for tax relief.

And I can understand why some—I mean, I don't understand it, but some people want to increase the size of the Federal Govern-

ment. And if the people that are running those ads here in Florida want to travel the State and say, "Support us because we want to increase the size of the Federal Government," I think they're going to find a lot of people aren't going to listen.

Thank you all.

### **Faith-Based Initiative**

**Q.** You're not backing down off your faith-based program, are you?

**The President.** Oh, not at all, no. Our faith-based—we've submitted a package to the United States Congress. I'm proud of the Faith-Based Initiative. There is a lot of bipartisan support on the Hill.

And somebody mentioned something about an article today. I haven't read it yet. But no, we're moving forward. It's the right thing to do.

**Q.** Thank you, sir.

**The President.** Okay, see you all soon.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 11:45 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida; Gen. Michael E. Ryan, USAF, Chief of Staff; and Chloe Bryant, Senior Airman Bryant's daughter. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

### **Remarks at the Youth Activities Center at Tyndall Air Force Base**

*March 12, 2001*

**Amy R. Justice.** Thank you for coming, sir. We're really looking forward to this.

**The President.** I'm looking forward to hearing from them. But one of the things I—my job as the Commander in Chief is to boost morale in the military. In order to keep the peace, the military must be strong and morale has got to be high. And I've come to talk about base housing. We want to make sure people are well housed in the military, and there's some money in my budget to do that.

*[At this point, a baby cried.]*

**The President.** Don't worry about it. Base housing's on the way. *[Laughter]*

I got to see new housing, and I got to see not-so-new housing. And it was important to

do so, and I appreciate the general giving me a tour. Anyway, thanks for letting me come by.

And by the way, I'm proud to be traveling with my brother Jeb. If you've got any problems, write him—[*laughter*—and the two Congressmen from this area. Congressman Boyd and Congressman Scarborough are with us. And of course, General Mike Ryan, who is from the Joint Chiefs. I appreciate you being here, General, as well.

But thank you all very much for giving me a chance to come. I look forward to hearing what you have to say, and it's your chance to give the Commander in Chief a few suggestions. And I'm interested.

I do want to say that I know a lot of families are worried about all the deployments that take place. And we'll honor our commitments. But the mission of this military is going to be, to be ready to fight and win war and, therefore, stop war from happening in the first place. And I think that's important for all of the folks who wear the uniform and their spouses to hear. The mission will be well focused, and that's what we'll be focusing our resources and attention on. I take it very seriously, because—and I believe strongly that we're going to be able to keep the peace. It's a noble mission for all of us involved with the military.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:16 p.m. He was welcomed by S. Sgt. Amy R. Justice, USAF, 325th Medical Group. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

### Remarks to the Rotary Club and Chamber of Commerce in Panama City

March 12, 2001

**The President.** Thank you all. Sit down, Governor. [*Laughter*] Well, I'm glad I came. Thank you for the invitation.

**Audience members.** We're glad to have you. [*Laughter*]

**The President.** It's one of these responsive meetings. [*Laughter*] Governor—what a good man he is. The key to our success is pretty simple: We listen to our mother. And

she is still telling us what to do. I'm listening about half the time.

I appreciate the two United States Congressmen who are here. Joe, thank you very much, and Allen, thank you very much, as well. I'm honored to have you both here. I've had some good visits with both of the Members. Sometimes we agree; sometimes we don't agree. But the thing about these two men is that we're going to agree to be respectful to each other. And that's what this country wants.

I want to thank the members of the Rotary. I want to thank the members of the chamber. I want to thank the economic development folks who gave me an opportunity to come and talk about what's on my mind. Walking in, the man from the Rotary said, "Our slogan is: Create awareness and take action." And that's exactly why I'm here. I want to create awareness about a common-sense budget and ask you to take action to help me get it passed.

It's good to see the leaders of the Florida Legislature, members elected to the statewide—on the ticket here in Florida. I want to thank you all for coming. I know there's a lot of local officials here. I always believe the government closest to the people is that which governs best. So I appreciate you all being here.

It was my honor to go to Tyndall today, to see the good folks who wear the uniform of the United States military, to tell them how much I appreciate their service to the country. I'm reminded today of how dangerous service can be. We lost some servicemen today in Kuwait on a training accident. I hope you'll join me in a moment of silence for those soldiers and their families.

[*At this point, a moment of silence was observed.*]

**The President.** God bless.

I'm here to talk about a budget. And there's a lot of talk in Washington about budgets. But here's what I believe. I believe the people who can best affect the budget are the people who pay the bills in the first place, the taxpayers of America.

Sometimes it seems like we tend to talk to ourselves in Washington. And that's why I like to travel around the country, talking

to the people who have got most at stake in the budget negotiations that go on in the Nation's Capital.

First, let me tell you that good budgeting means setting priorities. And part of my travels around the country is to explain where I think our priorities are.

It is a priority to make sure we pay the men and women who wear our uniform good wages. It's a priority in my budget to do so. It's a priority to make sure they're housed well. But it's also a priority to make sure if we spend money, that we spend it wisely. That's why I've asked the Secretary of Defense to do a bottom-to-top review about missions and spending and research and development dollars, to come up with a strategic vision of our military, not only today but what the military ought to look like tomorrow, to make sure that money is wisely spent when we spend your money on the military.

You see, I think we have a fantastic opportunity not only to keep the peace today but to redefine the terms of war, to use our new technologies to redefine how the battlefields are configured, so we have a better chance of keeping the peace. So we'll set priorities. The first priority is the people who wear the uniform.

The second priority is to make sure long-term objectives are clearly set and, as we spend money, to make sure we meet those objectives. But there's one priority of the Commander in Chief that requires no money, and that's to make it clear the mission of the military, to make clear the mission of those who wear our uniform, and it is this: to be well trained, to be ready to fight and win war, and therefore, prevent war from happening in the first place.

A second priority has been education. Now, we've increased the budget at the Federal level, but Governor, don't be too nervous. I remember where I come from. I believe in local control of schools. I strongly believe we ought to pass power. I know the secretary of education is here. It's good to see you, Charlie.

The reason I mention Charlie is, I believe that the people who care more about the education of the children who live in the Panhandle of Florida than anybody else are the

citizens of this part of the State. I know the Governor understands that. I know Charlie understands that. And the people in Washington have got to understand that. And that's why I look forward to working with Congress to pass power out of Washington, to provide as much flexibility with Federal money at the local level as needed, so that you all chart the path to excellence, so you figure out whether or not children are learning and, if not, make sure they do.

The temptation in Washington is to say, one-size-fits-all will work. But we know better than that. One size doesn't fit all when it comes to the education of our children. There needs to be local control of schools. There needs to be strong accountability measures. And when we find failure, we've got to free parents to make different choices for their children.

Social Security is a priority. I know there is a lot of talk, and there was during the campaign. I suspect there may be some, and for people who are trying to keep your money in Washington, they'll say, "Well, you can't have meaningful tax relief, otherwise, the Social Security system will fail." You read these polls. They're saying, you know, "Do you want to take away somebody's Social Security check, or do you want to have tax relief?" But that's not the choice. That's not the choice that we have here, as we work on this budget.

Because we set aside every dime of payroll taxes for one thing, and that is to spend it on Social Security. All this business about threatening people's Social Security checks is just not real, and it's not valid. The Congress and the White House agree that all the payroll taxes ought to be spent on only one thing, and that's the Social Security systems.

There's a lot of talk about health care, and there should be. The budget I submitted to Congress doubles the Medicare budget, for example. The budget I submitted to Congress increases by 2 times the amount of people who will be taken care of in community health centers. Now, we focus on health, and there is money in the budget to do so.

And so we've set priorities. Education is a priority. Keeping the peace is a priority. The health care of our citizens is a priority.

Retirement accounts are a priority. And there is still money left over.

But the difference between this administration and what happens in the past is that we grow discretionary spending by 4 percent. And I said, "Well, that seems like a reasonable number." But that's not what happened last time around. Last time, as the Congress was trying to get out of town, they had a bidding contest, and the discretionary spending increased by 8 percent. That's a huge amount of money. The baselines of the budget were that much higher, and we're adding on top of that.

And yet there are some saying, "He doesn't want to meet basic needs." What we need in Washington is fiscal discipline; we need priorities. We need to set priorities and fund it, so our budget increases by 4 percent. And by the way, just so you understand, the accounting talk there in the Nation's Capital, the definition of a budget cut is when numbers don't increase to expected levels.

So like, for example, if the baseline is one and the expected level is one and a half and I propose 1.4, that's called a spending cut. It's the darnedest accounting system I've ever seen. *[Laughter]* That's why I'm trying to bring some common sense into the budgeting of your money.

In the budget I submitted to the Congress, we pay down debt by \$2 trillion. Over the next 10 years, we will reduce the amount of debt at the Federal level by \$2 trillion. But let me also remind you all, as we talk about numbers, remember there is a lot of debt around our society. There is debt at the Federal level, and we do a good job of paying down a lot. But there is also consumer debt, credit card debt, debt that burdens the working people.

So as we talk about budgets, I just want you all to also keep in mind the budgets of the families who live in your neighborhood, budgets of people struggling to get ahead. You bet we're going to pay down debt at the national level. But we need to be mindful of the debt that burdens those who are struggling to get ahead and struggling to get into the middle class, as well.

Then I set aside a trillion dollars for contingencies. That can mean money to help our farmers. And one of the things you'll find

out about my administration is I respect and understand the importance of American agriculture, not only for our domestic consumption but for international trade purposes, as well. Farming is a very important part of our vision for the future.

And after setting priorities and growing the budget at what I believe is a reasonable rate of 4 percent and setting aside the payroll taxes, paying down debt, and putting aside a trillion over 10 years for contingencies, there is still money left over. And that's the fundamental debate.

There's a lady in—there's a lady in Iowa, western Iowa, a grandmother who stood up at an event I had, and she said, "I've seen a lot of children and grandchildren go through my house. And every time I leave a plate of cookies on the table, they eat it." And that's how I view surpluses. That's what I'm afraid is going to happen if we don't have fiscal discipline, and are willing to say that the surplus is the people's money. It's not the Government's money; it's the people's money. And that's the important thing for the Members of Congress and the Senate to keep in mind. It's not the Government's money; it's your money to begin with. And oh, there are some priorities that need to be kept, and we're keeping them.

But there's another priority, as far as I'm concerned, and that is, how best to help American families to help themselves, how best to help people access the middle class. And there's another important priority, and that is, let people have money as quickly as possible, that otherwise would go to Government, to provide a second wind to an economy that's slowing down.

One of the things that concerns me about tax relief is what they call targeted tax relief. That means Federal officials get to decide who's targeted in and who's targeted out. To me, that's not good public policy. I don't think we ought to try to pick winners and losers in Washington, DC. I think everybody's a winner in America, and I think if you pay taxes, you ought to get tax relief. And so I submitted a plan that reduces all rates, on everybody who pays taxes. We simplified the code.

This Tax Code of ours is unfair. It is unfair to people who are struggling to get ahead.

Incredibly enough, if somebody has—a single mom, for example, raising two children, if she earns more money above \$22,000, she pays a higher marginal rate on every additional dollar she earns than somebody who is successful. And she loses her earned-income tax credit, goes into the 15 percent bracket for the first time, and pays payroll taxes. She's paying nearly 50 percent on every dollar. This is somebody struggling to get ahead, somebody who's working the toughest job in America, by the way, and that's raising children on her own.

And yet, the Tax Code we have makes it unfair. And so we've reduced the bottom rate from 15 percent to 10 percent and increased the child credit from \$500 to \$1,000, to make it easier for that person to realize her dreams. The message is: The harder you work, the more money you have in your pocket in America; the harder you work, the easier it is to get ahead, and not the other way around.

But we also drop the top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent. And I know that's created a lot of howling in Washington, but I think you can help remind people over whom you've got some influence that the whole notion of dropping the top rate is to stimulate growth in the small-business sector of America. There are hundreds of small-business owners who are unincorporated, who are sole proprietors, who may be organized along Subchapter S lines, that pay that high marginal rate. And by dropping the rate, we're sending a clear message to America: The role of Government is not to create wealth; the role of Government is to create an environment in which a small-business owner can flourish, in which the entrepreneur can realize their dream.

The small-business owner is a job creator. The small-business owner also represents the best of America, which says, "If you dream big and work hard, you can own your own business." And by the way, when it comes time to pass that business on to your heir, we need to get rid of the death tax to make sure you can do so.

The House moved out our cut on marginal rates. I look forward to working with them on the rest of the package, including doing something about the marriage penalty and that—we send the wrong signal. Our Tax

Code ought to encourage marriage. We ought to encourage families. We ought not to penalize people who said, "I do" at the altar.

So there is a lot of work to be done, and I am here to ask for your help. Instead of sending people your check, why don't you send them your check and send them an e-mail while you're at it. Why don't you let your Senators know that you think tax relief is not only good for the economy, but you think tax relief is good for working families here in the State of Florida.

And let me talk about two such people, Darrell Calhoun and Andrea Calhoun. They're here with their children. Raise your hand, Darrell. Darrell is a small-business owner. He owns a fence company. Today, in America, he pays \$1,200 in Federal income taxes. When this plan is fully enacted, he will pay zero in Federal income taxes. He and Andrea are raising Garrett and Madison.

Oh, I know some will say, "Well, \$1,200 isn't all that much." It's a lot to them. It's a lot to people who are paying high energy bills today in America. It's a lot to people who struggle with their own personal debt. I think it makes sense to set priorities. I think it makes sense to pay down debt at the national level. I think it makes sense to make sure the retirement systems work.

But I think instead of spending on bigger Government, I think we ought to trust people with their own money. I'd rather have these good people spend the \$1,200 than the people in Washington, DC. And that's the fundamental debate that's taking place, and I'm glad we're discussing it. It's really what democracy is about. It would be better if they did everything the President said. [Laughter] Sometimes it doesn't work that way. But they darn sure better listen to the people. And the people can have a large say as to whether or not we want fiscally responsible Government in Washington, DC, or whether we're going to continue those spending orgies that spend your money on bigger and bigger and bigger baselines of budgets.

It's time to have fiscal sanity in our Nation's Capital, and it's time to remember who pays the bills. It's the working people of America who pay the bills. It's so important, for those of us who hold the high honor of

representing you, to trust the people. After all, that's the strength of America, the people. But the great strength of the country is not our governments. The great strength of the country are the people, the people who will help to make this country the—fulfill its promise for everyone who's lucky to live here.

I say that because the common acts of decency and courtesy that take place neighborhood to neighborhood are really part of the strength of America. The fact that there are moms and dads who become Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Boys and Girls Club leaders, that take a child around the shoulders and say, "Somebody loves you," and, "Somebody cares," that's the strength of America.

The fact that there are little centers of love that exist because somebody says, "What can I do to help? What can I do to live that common call to love a neighbor like I'd like to be loved myself?" Now that's the strength of America. The great strength of our country lie in the hearts and souls of the American citizens. My job is to lift the spirit of the country. I'll argue on your behalf, and I'm going to argue until I get a bill to sign. It's out of the House. Come on out of the Senate, and I'll sign it. And I'll argue on your behalf.

We'll have our agreements, and we'll have our disagreements, but my pledge is to have those agreements and disagreements in a respectful way. But there's more to the job than just arguing on your behalf when it comes to fiscal sanity in Washington. The job really is to lift the spirit of the country; to call upon the best; to remind the moms and dads, your most important job is to love your children with all your heart and all your soul; to call upon the compassion of America—and by doing so, we, as a nation, can unite, and we, as a nation, can hold out that great beacon of hope. We want it to be for every person who lives in our country.

What an honor it is to represent you all, and what an honor it is to be the President of the greatest country on the face of the Earth. Write your Senators; let your Congressmen know; and God bless.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:38 p.m. at the Marina Civic Center. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida; Representatives Joe

Scarborough and Allen Boyd; and Charlie Crist, commissioner, Florida Department of Education.

### **Remarks on Signing Legislation Designating the John Joseph Moakley United States Courthouse March 13, 2001**

Thank you all very much. Please be seated. It's my honor to welcome you all to the Rose Garden. So many friends and colleagues of Joe Moakley are here—I want to thank you all for coming. This is the first bill-signing ceremony to take place in the Rose Garden since I've been the President. And I'm glad to be part of an event honoring a distinguished Member of the United States Congress.

After today, the U.S. Courthouse, located at 1 Courthouse Way in Boston, will be officially known as the John Joseph Moakley United States Courthouse. It is a fitting tribute to a remarkable man.

Joe Moakley is a man of strong opinions and broad respect. And in this town it isn't always easy to combine the two, but over a long career he's been able to do so. He's a self-described bread-and-butter Democrat. Others know him as a formidable advocate for his party's cause. Ever since he joined the House of Representatives in 1972, he has made the cares and concerns of everyday people his business.

Joe is not only a passionate advocate for what he believes in, he's an enormously effective Member of Congress. Representative Moakley understands how the United States House of Representatives operates. He knows its rules, and he knows its ways.

But what makes Joe Moakley exceptional is not simply his political skills, it is the fact that he's so well-liked and admired by members of both political parties. Joe has a well-deserved reputation for being civil, friendly, and funny. Members love his sharp Irish sense of humor. They admire his courage in the face of adversity. And a few past Members of the Rules Committee even liked his singing voice. Notice I said a few. *[Laughter]*

But above everything else, Joe Moakley has brought honor to his profession. Some people run for office by trying to tear down

the institutions of Government; not this man from South Boston. Joe loves the United States Congress, and he loves public service.

Like Robert Kennedy, another son of Massachusetts, Joe Moakley considers politics to be an honorable profession, an opportunity for achievement, and a truly exciting adventure. If Speaker McCormack and Speaker O'Neill were here today, they would have a simple tribute to this good man: Well done, John Joseph Moakley. You served your constituents and your Congress and your country with honor and distinction.

Congressman Moakley.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:02 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. H.R. 559, approved March 13, was assigned Public Law No. 107-2. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Representative Moakley.

### **Notice—Continuation of Iran Emergency**

*March 13, 2001*

On March 15, 1995, by Executive Order 12957, the President declared a national emergency with respect to Iran pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701–1706) to deal with the threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States constituted by the actions and policies of the Government of Iran, including its support for international terrorism, efforts to undermine the Middle East peace process, and acquisition of weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them. On May 6, 1995, the President issued Executive Order 12959 imposing more comprehensive sanctions to further respond to this threat, and on August 19, 1997, the President issued Executive Order 13059 consolidating and clarifying the previous orders. The last notice of continuation was published in the *Federal Register* on March 14, 2000.

Because the actions and policies of the Government of Iran continue to threaten the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States, the national emergency declared on March 15, 1995, must continue in effect beyond March 15, 2001.

Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing the national emergency with respect to Iran. Because the emergency declared by Executive Order 12957 constitutes an emergency separate from that declared on November 14, 1979, by Executive Order 12170, this renewal is distinct from the emergency renewal of November 2000. This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

**George W. Bush**

The White House,  
March 13, 2001.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:57 a.m., March 13, 2001]

NOTE: This notice was published in the *Federal Register* on March 14.

### **Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Iran** *March 13, 2001*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice, stating that the emergency declared with respect to Iran is to continue in effect beyond March 15, 2001, to the *Federal Register* for publication. The most recent notice continuing this emergency was published in the *Federal Register* on March 14, 2000.

The crisis constituted by the actions and policies of the Government of Iran, including its support for international terrorism, efforts to undermine Middle East peace, and acquisition of weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them, that led to the declaration of a national emergency on March 15, 1995, has not been resolved. These actions and policies are contrary to the interests

of the United States in the region and threaten vital interests of the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that I must continue the declaration of national emergency with respect to Iran necessary to maintain comprehensive sanctions against Iran to respond to this threat.

**George W. Bush**

The White House,  
March 13, 2001.

**Message to the Congress  
Transmitting a Report on the  
National Emergency With Respect  
to Iran**

*March 13, 2001*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), and section 505(c) of the International Security and Development Cooperation Act of 1985, 22 U.S.C. 2349aa-9(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12957 of March 15, 1995.

**George W. Bush**

The White House,  
March 13, 2001.

**Letter to Members of the Senate on  
the Kyoto Protocol on Climate  
Change**

*March 13, 2001*

*Dear \_\_\_\_\_:*

Thank you for your letter of March 6, 2001, asking for the Administration's views on global climate change, in particular the Kyoto Protocol and efforts to regulate carbon dioxide under the Clean Air Act. My Administration takes the issue of global climate change very seriously.

As you know, I oppose the Kyoto Protocol because it exempts 80 percent of the world, including major population centers such as

China and India, from compliance, and would cause serious harm to the U.S. economy. The Senate's vote, 95-0, shows that there is a clear consensus that the Kyoto Protocol is an unfair and ineffective means of addressing global climate change concerns.

As you also know, I support a comprehensive and balanced national energy policy that takes into account the importance of improving air quality. Consistent with this balanced approach, I intend to work with the Congress on a multipollutant strategy to require power plants to reduce emissions of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, and mercury. Any such strategy would include phasing in reductions over a reasonable period of time, providing regulatory certainty, and offering market-based incentives to help industry meet the targets. I do not believe, however, that the government should impose on power plants mandatory emissions reductions for carbon dioxide, which is not a "pollutant" under the Clean Air Act.

A recently released Department of Energy Report, "Analysis of Strategies for Reducing Multiple Emissions from Power Plants," concluded that including caps on carbon dioxide emissions as part of a multiple emissions strategy would lead to an even more dramatic shift from coal to natural gas for electric power generation and significantly higher electricity prices compared to scenarios in which only sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides were reduced.

This is important new information that warrants a reevaluation, especially at a time of rising energy prices and a serious energy shortage. Coal generates more than half of America's electricity supply. At a time when California has already experienced energy shortages, and other Western states are worried about price and availability of energy this summer, we must be very careful not to take actions that could harm consumers. This is especially true given the incomplete state of scientific knowledge of the causes of, and solutions to, global climate change and the lack of commercially available technologies for removing and storing carbon dioxide.

Consistent with these concerns, we will continue to fully examine global climate



change issues—including the science, technologies, market-based systems, and innovative options for addressing concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. I am very optimistic that, with the proper focus and working with our friends and allies, we will be able to develop technologies, market incentives, and other creative ways to address global climate change.

I look forward to working with you and others to address global climate change issues in the context of a national energy policy that protects our environment, consumers, and economy.

Sincerely,

**George W. Bush**

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Senators Jesse Helms, Larry E. Craig, Pat Roberts, and Chuck Hagel.

### **Remarks During a Tour of the Youth Entertainment Academy and an Exchange With Reporters in Plainfield, New Jersey**

*March 14, 2001*

**The President.** It talks about armies—there is an army of compassion in America, too. That's what I'm here to highlight, not only the technology but the hearts.

One of the things our Government is going to do is to recognize the way faith-based initiatives—they take place in neighborhoods all around America. And I believe strongly that Congress ought to fund programs that will allow for low income parents to access after-school programs that can be run by faith-based programs as well as secular programs.

We ought to ask the question, does it work? And if it works, we ought to empower those who are making it work.

One of the problems we face in society is, Government cannot make people love one another. I wish we could. But we darn sure can find those who do love their neighbor and facilitate programs that will change people's lives.

So I'm honored to be here, and I want to thank you for your compassion and your love.

*[At this point, the tour continued.]*

**The President.** I'm honored, and I can't thank you all enough for providing a little haven of love and haven of hope. And I want to thank you all for your fantastic music. But more importantly, I want to thank you for the example you've set. All of us who are in positions where people look at us must understand we've got to set examples.

And the drummer was telling me not only was he learning how to hone his skills, but he's learning how to send the right signal to people in his church and in his family about making the right choices, lessons he's learned here. And I am so grateful for your love and your compassion.

Our Government must serve as a spawning ground for social entrepreneurs, many of whom have heard the call to help a neighbor in need through their religion. We ought to welcome faith-based programs into our society, not fear them. And I have come to this program to, not only herald what you do but to say to others who are wondering whether or not the Government is going to thwart efforts or enable, that we intend to be enablers.

So thank you for letting me come. And Governor, thank you for your time, appreciate your support. And Congressmen and mayor and Buster—*[laughter]*—Madame President, thank you all.

*[The President took questions from reporters.]*

### **National Economy**

**Q.** Mr. President, on the economy, sir, how concerned do you think Americans should be, how concerned are you about the turmoil in the markets and the state of the economy in general? And do you think it's time to start talking the economy up?

**The President.** Well, I'm concerned that a lot of Americans' portfolios have been affected; people that put aside money in the stock market are now seeing their asset base decline. But I've got great faith in our economy. I've got great faith in the entrepreneurial spirit. And I believe the plans we're putting in place by working with the Congress are going to serve as a second wind for economic growth.

### **Carbon Dioxide Regulation**

**Q.** Why did you change your mind on making carbon dioxide—regulating carbon dioxide?

**The President.** We'll enforce our—this administration will enforce the clean air laws of the country. We will work with our utilities to encourage better efficiency, so as to clean up the air. We've got an energy crisis in America that we have to deal with in a commonsense way. It is important to not only encourage conservation, but we need to increase the supplies of energy, so as to make sure that our consumers and small businesses and large business have got the energy necessary to not only heat their homes but to run their businesses.

**Q.** What has changed, though, since the campaign, when you said we should regulate it, so now when you say we shouldn't—

**The President.** We're in an energy crisis now. We're going to have to recognize—our country has got to recognize that we need more powerplants, that we—50 percent of our fuel source for our utilities comes from coal. I'm confident, with better efficiencies, we'll keep improving our air quality.

But this is an administration that will address our problems in a commonsense way, and we've got an energy crisis.

**Q.** How do you respond to criticism, sir, that you have gone back on a campaign promise here?

**The President.** Ours is an administration that will deal with the problems of the day. We've got an energy crisis in America. We use a lot of coal, and we need a lot of coal to fuel our plants, to make sure Americans have got the ability to heat and cool their homes.

**Q.** Are you feeling a lot of pressure from industry on this issue?

**The President.** I was responding to reality. And reality is, the Nation has got a real problem when it comes to energy. We need more sources of energy. We need more powerplants. We need more exploration for natural gas, and we need clean coal technology.

I am concerned that if we don't act in a commonsense way that our people will not be able to eat and cool their homes. And I'm worried about a failure of an energy pol-

icy could affect our economy, and we're dealing with it in a commonsense way.

### **New Jersey Gubernatorial Election**

**Q.** This is the first time you've been back to New Jersey since the election, and we have a Governor's race coming up. How often are you going to come back, and are you going to campaign for the new acting Governor?

**The President.** Well, everybody knows the new acting Governor is my good friend. And I value his friendship. I will be back in the general election to help him win, if he wants me. [Laughter]

### **Faith-Based Initiative**

**Q.** Mr. President, your charitable choice proposals are probably not going to be in the legislation that goes to the Senate. Are you disappointed about that?

**The President.** First of all, the reports about our charitable choice legislation not going full steam ahead is just simply not true. We're moving on a timetable that we're comfortable with. And part of our Faith-Based Initiative was to make sure we take a full inventory of programs that now exist within the Federal Government.

So we'll move our package, and I'm confident it will get passed. So I really appreciate the bipartisan effort that has taken place. Joe Lieberman has said some very positive things, for example, about our program. Americans are—want to see the Government welcome faith-based programs and a compassionate delivery of health.

So we're going to have a good package, and I'll be signing a good bill.

**Q.** It's not a setback, sir, that they've decided that there's a little too much controversy on that for now?

**The President.** I'm not sure what report you're referring to. But the reports I get is that there is bipartisan support for the Faith-Based Initiative. And I'm pretty confident we're going to get a very good bill. And I appreciate those Members who are working with us on it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:45 a.m. at Grace Episcopal Church. In his remarks, he referred to Acting Gov. Donald T. DiFrancesco of New Jersey. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

**Remarks to the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce in East Brunswick, New Jersey**  
*March 14, 2001*

Well, Governor, thank you very much. I appreciate your kind words, and I appreciate your friendship. I got to know Donny and his wife, and I respect them a lot. And I know the people of New Jersey do, as well.

It's good to see my friend the Speaker. I had him down to the Governor's Mansion in Texas, and I want you to know he didn't spill. *[Laughter]*

I'm honored to be traveling with members of the New Jersey congressional delegation today. We flew down on Air Force One. I am thrilled that Members of the House of Representatives came, Rodney Frelinghuysen and Marge Roukema, Jim Saxton, Chris Smith, Rush Holt, and the newly elected Mike Ferguson. And I want to thank you all very much.

I'm also very pleased that Senator Corzine and Senator Torricelli came, as well. I have been most pleased with the comments that Senator Torricelli has been making. It shows that—I don't want to single anybody out. *[Laughter]* Not one vote is more important than any other vote. But he has shown a lot of common sense as far as I'm concerned.

I am thankful they're here; it gives me a chance to sing the praises of those in Congress who are joining my administration in changing the tone in Washington. We'll have a lot of debates on important issues. And we're in the middle of one that I want to talk about today. But we're going to show, Senator Torricelli and me, Senator Corzine and me, Senator Holt and me, that Republicans and—I mean, Congressman Holt and me. *[Laughter]* Don't want to be rushing your career. *[Laughter]* But we can show that Republicans and Democrats can differ, but we can do so in a civil way. We can set a better example for people who look at our Government than the example that had been set in the past, that we can have disagreements.

So I like to tell people I'm beginning to see a culture of respect develop in our Nation's Capital, and also, by the way, a culture of achievement that I hope people will judge

us based upon results, not how we say things. And recently, the Congress has shown their willingness to focus on results. The ergonomic regulation reform that took place shows a positive development and our willingness of people to get things done.

We got a good piece of legislation moving out of the Senate in terms of education, which I'll talk about in a little while. I mean, we're showing people around the country that it's possible to have a culture of positive achievement in the Nation's Capital, and for that I'm grateful. And I want to thank the Members of Congress who are willing to work together to get some positive things done on behalf of the people.

Joan, I want to thank you very much for inviting me, and I want to thank all the folks who worked so hard to put this event on. We didn't give you very much notice. *[Laughter]* But you responded, and I appreciate your hard work. And I appreciate those who spent hours over the weekend making sure that this event gave me a chance to come and talk about an incredibly important issue, and that's the people's budget.

I like to remind people it makes sense to have common sense in Washington, particularly when it comes to spending your money. And the first principle involved with budgeting is for our Government to remember whose money it is that we're spending. We're working with the taxpayers' money. It's not the Federal Government's money. I like to remind people that the surplus is the people's money, and we better be wise about how we spend it.

And it means setting priorities. It's important for the President to set priorities, to set clear priorities so that Congress doesn't overspend or get exuberant, in their attempts to get reelected, with your money. And so some of my priorities are these: Education is a priority; I think it's incredibly important. So we've increased the education budget by a significant amount of money.

But lest you forget where I came from, I also strongly believe in local control of schools. I believe we've got to trust the people in New Jersey to run the schools of New Jersey. I also believe, though, in return for Federal money, States and local jurisdictions should measure to determine whether or not

children are learning to read and write and add and subtract.

I believe the cornerstone of reform is not only to insist upon local control of schools, which means flexibility and authority at the local level when it comes to spending Federal money, but it also means that if you receive help, you and the citizens of New Jersey must devise accountability systems to show us all whether or not children are learning to read and write and add and subtract. And if so, the teachers need to be praised, and the principals and superintendents. But if not, if our society finds children trapped in schools that will not teach and will not change, instead of standing by and saying it's okay, good public policy demands something to challenge the status quo.

Oh, I've heard all the arguments about accountability. Some say, "Well, we can't measure. The Federal Government does not have a role in education and, therefore, should not insist upon results." I disagree. We're results-oriented people in this country. And in return for taxpayers' money, we ought to insist upon results.

Now, I don't believe in a national test, nor do I believe the Federal Government ought to tell New Jersey how to test its students. If you believe in local control of schools, you trust your Governor, and you trust the local folks. But I darn sure believe in asking the question, are the children learning?

I'm told some say, "Well, it's racist to test." It's racist not to test, because the people who generally are left behind in a system that does not measure are those who it's so much easier to quit on. It's so much easier to say that an inner-city child can't learn. "Let's just move him through. Let's have no accountability." It's so much easier to quit on a child whose parents may not speak English as a first language.

No, we need accountability in the public school system. We need results. And we'll herald success, and we need to be bold enough to blow the whistle on failure by giving parents different options if their children are trapped in failing schools.

A priority of mine is to keep the peace. And it starts with making sure the military is well paid and well housed. So in the budget I submitted to Congress, we increased the

pay of the people who wear the uniform, and we've got a housing initiative to make sure they're well housed.

It's one thing to pay people well; it's another thing to make sure the mission is clearly defined. In order to increase morale in the military, we must have a clearly defined mission, which is to be able to fight and win war and, therefore, prevent war from happening in the first place.

A priority of mine is to make sure the retirement systems in the country work well, which basically means that all the money going into the Social Security System be spent only on one thing, and that is Social Security. There is universal agreement with Republicans and Democrats in the Congress that we're not going to use the payroll taxes for anything other than Social Security. And that makes sense.

It not only makes sense, good fiscal sense, it also makes sense because a substantive reform that I look forward to working with Congress on is to make sure the Social Security System is vibrant and strong, particularly as we head into the 21st century, which means not only will we guarantee payments to the seniors who rely upon Social Security today, but we need to think differently and let younger workers manage some of their own money in the private markets, to make sure there is a Social Security System around tomorrow.

Another priority is the health care system. And as an example, the budget I submitted to Congress doubles the Medicare payments over the next 10 years—got over 100-and-something million new dollars of spending in Medicare. And that makes sense, because we must fulfill the obligation to our seniors, meet the promise of a health care system that works for seniors. It's one thing to spend money, but the system also needs to be reformed. And we need to give seniors a variety of options from which to choose, all of which will include prescription drugs, in order to make sure the Medicare system works as we go into the 21st century.

So we're setting priorities. Community health centers is an incredibly important part of the health care mix in America. It's a place where the poor or near-poor can find primary care. The budget I submitted doubles the

number of people who will be served in community health centers over the next 5 years.

It's also a budget that understands the great role of faith programs in our society. I went to one today, run by Rev. LaVerne Ball of the Youth Entertainment Academy, housed in the basement of a church in Plainfield, New Jersey. It's a place that is staffed by people who have heard the universal call to love a neighbor like they would like to be loved themselves. I've expanded in my budget the amount of money for after-school programs and have said loud and clear: If you're a faith-based program, you ought to be able to access that money in order to provide after-care programs for children who are looking for something other than just the standard old way of conducting after-school programs, who are looking for somebody to put their arm around them and say, "I love you, and I care."

Now, this is a budget that meets priorities. We grow the discretionary spending in the budget by 4 percent. Now, that's where the friction is coming in Washington, because the discretionary spending at the end of last year grew at 8 percent. And when you're talking in terms of trillions, that's a huge amount of the increase of—the role of Federal Government.

So we say to the Congress, "There are not many workers in America who got a 4 percent pay raise last year. Surely, you can live within 4 percent discretionary spending. By focusing on priorities, surely the Members of Congress, both Republicans and Democrats, can live within a 4 percent increase of discretionary spending."

I have made it clear that debt reduction is a priority of this administration, and so we pay down, in the budget I submitted, \$2 trillion of debt over the next 10 years. That's all the available debt; that's all the debt that becomes available to pay off during that period of time. That's \$2 trillion; that's the largest debt repayment of any nation at any time in any history.

So the budget sets priorities. It grows discretionary spending at 4 percent, considerably less than the spending orgy that took place last year but, nevertheless, enough to meet the needs. It pays down \$2 trillion of debt. It sets aside the payroll tax for Social

Security. It doubles the Medicare budget. And there's also a trillion-dollar contingency fund, so there's another trillion over 10 years that's set aside for contingencies. It may be an agricultural issue that we need to deal with. We may need to bolster the payment of FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency. There's money set aside. It makes common sense not to spend all the money, and so therefore, we've got money set aside. We pay down debt; we meet discretionary spending; and there's still money left over. And that's where the battle is. And the fundamental question is what to do with it.

My belief is that once we meet priorities, instead of increasing the size and the scope of the Federal Government, we better remember who pays the bills in America. We better remember the working people. We better remember who created this surplus in the first place.

And so I submitted a plan that says, instead of increasing discretionary spending, let's give people more of their own money back. And it makes sense to do so. It makes sense to do so. Our economy is beginning to sputter. I believe—I was asked about the markets today; I'm sorry people are losing value in their portfolios. That worries me, but with the right policies, I'm confident our economy will recover—the right policies, fiscal policies. And that means giving people money back, in plain language. Or better yet, don't take it in the first place.

And we're making good progress on this issue. We're making good progress. The House passed the cut on marginal rates, and I want to thank the Members of the House who were with me on that. It makes sense.

Let me tell you the principles behind that part of the tax relief plan. I don't believe the proper role of Government is to try to pick and choose winners when it comes to tax relief. See, I don't think there's a right American or wrong American when it comes to those who pay taxes. I think, if we're going to have tax relief, all Americans ought to get tax relief.

So we reduced all the rates on everybody who pays taxes and simplified the code; reduced the rates from 5 to 4; we dropped the bottom rate from 15 percent to 10 percent. I'm asking Congress to increase the child

credit from \$500 to \$1,000 per child, and let me give you the benefits.

The benefits of that are—is this: We have a Tax Code that is unfair for people who are trying to get ahead in life, people who are struggling on the outskirts of poverty. If you're a single mom raising your children, two children, for example, and you're making about \$22,000 a year, for every additional dollar you earn in working the toughest job in America, raising those kids—for every additional dollar you earn, you pay a higher marginal rate than a Wall Street banker. And that's the facts. As you begin to lose your earned-income tax credit and go in the 15 percent bracket and pay payroll taxes, the hardest dollar you earn is taxed at nearly 50 percent.

And folks, that isn't right. That's not what the American experience should be. It seems like to me the harder you work, the more money you ought to put in your pocket. And our Tax Code ought to reflect that, and that's why we dropped the bottom rate from 15 to 10 and increased the child credit.

But we also dropped the top rate, from 39.6 to 33 percent. And I know there's a lot of people that are hollering about that part of the tax package. First, if you pay taxes, you ought to get relief. But I want the Members of Congress to understand that part of this plan is to stimulate the growth of small businesses and entrepreneurs, and that thousands of small-business owners in America are unincorporated or sole proprietors, or Subchapter S's, and pay taxes at the highest marginal rates. And by cutting the top rate, we stimulate the growth of small business in America.

Those who would like to leave your money in Washington try to make us feel bad about cutting the top rate. But I come from the school of thought that the American Dream must be alive and well. The role of Government is not to create wealth but an environment in which the entrepreneur can realize his or her dreams, in which the small-business owner can find capital in order to fuel an idea. And cutting that top rate is an infusion of capital for the small-business owner in America, and it makes good economic sense. And it makes good sense to re-

inforce the American Dream through good tax policy.

This Tax Code is not only unfair to people struggling to get ahead at the bottom end of the economic ladder; it sends the wrong signals. It doesn't make sense, and it's unfair to tax marriage in America. We need to do something about the marriage penalty in the Tax Code. And it's unfair to tax a person's assets twice, and we ought to get rid of the death tax in the Tax Code, as well.

This plan is fiscally sound. It makes common sense. We meet priorities; we pay down debt; we set aside money for Social Security; but we also remember who pays the bills. It makes sense for our economy to give people their money back, and that's why I look forward to working with Congress to make sure this tax relief package is retroactive.

Senator Corzine and I on the plane talked about how we'd make sure money gets in the economy as quickly as possible. And I appreciate his thoughts along those lines. This is part of an economic recovery plan, but this plan is also good for American families. And the Dietrich family is with us today. Where are you? There you go. Thank you for coming, Mark and Kim and Mark, Jr., and Christopher. And I've asked them to come because oftentimes during the course of these tax debates and budgets, all you hear are numbers. But it's important for me to remind people in America that there are lives affected by our discussions.

And there's a lot of focus, for example, on debt at the national level, and that's fine. That makes sense. But I also want the policy-makers to understand there's debt at the local level, too, that a lot of hardworking Americans have got credit card debt. And when you couple credit card debt, for example, with high energy prices, it puts people in a bind. And good public policy frees Americans to be able to make more decisions for their families.

These good folks pay \$5,700 in Federal income taxes. When our plan is fully implemented, they will save \$2,000. Now, that may not sound like a lot—oh, I know, in this land of big numbers, \$2,000 may not sound like a lot, but it's a lot to them. It's a lot to a family who is worrying about high energy bills. It's a lot to a family who wants to put

aside money for their children. It's a lot for moms and dads who are concerned about the future of their family. It's a lot. And my attitude is, once we made basic needs, I'd rather have these good people spending the \$2,000 than the United States Congress spending it.

It's a fundamental decision where we put our trust. And that's what I want this debate to focus on: Who do you trust? Oh, I love dealing with the Members of the Congress, and they're good folks. They care a lot about their country. But we ought to trust the people of America. We ought to trust them to spend their own money. We ought to trust them to make the right decisions for their families. We ought to have a limited and focused and energetic Federal Government that, when it's all said and done, holds the people up in our trust.

And after all, that's not only important for good economic policy; that's important to make sure America fulfills its promise for everybody who is fortunate enough to live here. Because, you see, the great strength of the country really doesn't exist in the halls of our governments; the great strength of America is in the hearts and souls of the American citizens.

One of the biggest honors of my job is to be able to travel the country and say thanks to those social entrepreneurs who literally change America, one face at a time; people who don't wait for Government to act and who say to a neighbor in need, "What can I do to help? What can I do, brother or sister, to help you on your walk?" I think of Catholic Charities that provide such incredible service all around America. I think about homeless shelters staffed by volunteers who feel the need to help somebody in need. No, the great strength of this country, folks, exists in neighborhood after neighborhood after neighborhood, where people of religion and people who don't give a hoot about religion say, "What can I do to help a neighbor in need?"

My job is not only to argue good policy on behalf of the people and argue on your behalf to make sure your money ends up in your pocket after needs are met; my job is also to lift the spirit of the country and to call upon the best, to work to unite our Nation, but always remember that the true

strength of America is our people and the hearts of our people and the compassion of America.

I'm fortunate to be the President of the greatest land on the face of the Earth. It's an unimaginable honor. And I want to thank you all for giving me the chance to come and talk about a commonsense policy for the budget, but to remind you that if you see somebody in need, put your arm around them; tell them God loves them.

Godspeed to you all, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:35 p.m. in the ballroom at the East Brunswick Hilton. In his remarks, he referred to Acting Gov. Donald T. DiFrancesco of New Jersey; Diane DiFrancesco, Governor DiFrancesco's wife; New Jersey State Assembly Speaker Jack Collins; and Joan Verplanck, president, New Jersey Chamber of Commerce.

### **Exchange With Reporters on Returning From the Friends of Ireland Luncheon on Capitol Hill**

*March 15, 2001*

**The President.** Hey, look who's here.

**The First Lady.** Hi, everybody.

**The President.** Barney's back. [*Laughter*]

**The First Lady.** Barney had a really good trip.

**The President.** Hey, Spot, look who's here.

**Q.** Mrs. Bush, where are you coming from?

**The First Lady.** I'm coming from Texas. I've been at the ranch.

### **Meeting With Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland**

**Q.** What do you expect out of your meeting with the Irish leaders?

**The President.** Pardon me?

**Q.** What do you expect out of your meeting with the Irish PM—Prime Minister?

**The President.** I had a good meeting, and I'll have one tomorrow, as well. Looking forward to it. We'll be discussing the Good Friday agreement, what I can do to help—be reaffirming our trade with Ireland. We had a good visit with him at lunch. I'm looking forward to seeing him tomorrow.

**Campaign Finance Reform Legislation**

**Q.** Mr. President, are you prepared to send your suggestions on campaign finance legislation to the Hill, and——

**The President.** Pretty soon.

**Q.** ——what would you like to see in it?

**The President.** Well, wait until I send them up there, but we'll be sending some principles up here pretty soon.

**Q.** Not today?

**The President.** Maybe today.

**Q.** Mr. President, to follow up, I mean, do you still support limited soft money contributions?

**The President.** I think we ought to get rid of labor union and corporate soft money. And I know we need to make sure we have—to make sure that shareholders and labor union members have got a say-so on how their money is spent.

**Assistant Press Secretary Gordon Johndroe.** Thank you all very much.

**The President.** Just getting warmed up. [Laughter]

**Q.** Thank you, Barney.

**The President.** Thank you.

NOTE: The exchange began at 2:22 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to his dogs Spot and Barney. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

**Letter to the Senate Majority and Minority Leaders on Campaign Finance Reform Legislation**

March 15, 2001

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

As the Senate prepares to consider campaign finance reform legislation, I wanted to highlight my principles for reform. I am committed to working with the Congress to ensure that fair and balanced campaign finance reform legislation is enacted.

These principles represent my framework for assessing campaign finance reform legislation. I remain open to other ideas to meet our shared goals.

I am hopeful that, working together, we can achieve responsible campaign finance reforms.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

**Campaign Finance Reform: President Bush's Reform Principles**

**Protect Rights of Individuals to Participate in Democracy:** President Bush believes democracy is first and foremost about the rights of individuals to express their views. He supports strengthening the role of individuals in the political process by: 1) updating the limits established more than two decades ago on individual giving to candidates and national parties; and 2) protecting the rights of citizen groups to engage in issue advocacy.

**Maintain Strong Political Parties:** President Bush believes political parties play an essential role in making America's democratic system operate. He wants to maintain the strength of parties, and not to weaken them. Any reform should help political parties more fully engage citizens in the political process and encourage them to express their views and to vote.

**Ban Corporate and Union Soft Money:** Corporations and labor unions spend millions of dollars every election cycle in unregulated "soft" money to influence federal elections. President Bush supports a ban on unregulated corporate and union contributions of soft money to political parties.

**Eliminate Involuntary Contributions:** President Bush believes no one should be forced to support a candidate or cause against his or her will. He therefore supports two parallel reforms: 1) legislation to prohibit corporations from using treasury funds for political activity without the permission of shareholders; and 2) legislation to require unions to obtain authorization from each dues-paying worker before spending those dues on activities unrelated to collective bargaining.

**Require Full and Prompt Disclosure:** President Bush also believes that in an open society, the best safeguard against abuse is full disclosure. He supports full, prompt and



constitutionally permissible disclosure of contributions and expenditures designed to influence the outcome of federal elections, so voters will have complete and timely information on which to make informed decisions.

**Promote Fair, Balanced, Constitutional Approach:** President Bush believes reform should not favor any one party over another or incumbents over challengers. Both corporations and unions should be prohibited from giving soft money to political parties, and both corporations and unions should have to obtain permission from their stockholders or dues-paying workers before spending treasury funds or dues on politics. President Bush supports including a non-severability provision, so if any provision of the bill is found unconstitutional, the entire bill is sent back to Congress for further adjustments and deliberations. This provision will ensure fair and balanced campaign finance reform.

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Trent Lott, Senate majority leader, and Thomas A. Daschle, Senate minority leader. Copies of this letter were provided to all other Senators.

### **Remarks at a Saint Patrick's Day Shamrock Presentation Ceremony With Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland**

*March 16, 2001*

*Taoiseach*, thank you very much, sir. We're so honored you're here. Laura and I welcome you and welcome our guests. Thank you all for coming. We accept this crystal of shamrocks, not just as a symbol of Ireland but as a symbol of a strong friendship between our nations, our shared values and shared history and shared hopes. Thank you for continuing this Saint Patrick's Day tradition. And we really appreciate this wonderful gift.

But Saint Patrick's Day is also a time for everyone to reflect on Ireland's many gifts to the world. We are thankful, first, for all that Ireland and the Prime Minister have done to further the cause of peace in Northern Ireland. There's an Irish expression, "the work praises the man." The peace that holds today in Northern Ireland is no small measure a tribute to the Prime Minister and his

courageous leadership. And I assured him, and will continue to do so, that the United States stands ready to help in any way that the governments involved need.

The world is also thankful for the thousands of peacekeepers Ireland sends to other troubled corners of the globe, everywhere from Kosovo to East Timor. And we're thankful for the generous development aid Ireland sends to the world's poorest nations.

But Ireland's most precious gift to the world has been the Irish. No nation has benefited more from Irish talent and industry than the United States. You've given us Presidents, nine signers of the Declaration of Independence. In fact, so many Irish served as volunteers in the Continental Army, a Lord in Parliament lamented, "We have lost America through the Irish." [*Laughter*]

Today, over 44 million Irish-Americans reinforce the natural bonds of friendship between our nations. The United States is proud of our strong ties of trade and investment and proud that they have contributed to the strong economy that you have led. We look forward to working even more closely with Ireland, particularly now that it serves on the U.N. Security Council.

According to legend, Saint Patrick returned to Ireland after hearing the Irish people beckon him in a dream to come and walk among us once more. Well, today, it is a world that beckons the Irish to continue walking among us and sharing with us the rich culture, the large hearts, and good works.

So Mr. Prime Minister, America is proud to call Ireland a friend, not just on Saint Patrick's Day but on every day.

Welcome.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:36 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the Prime Minister Ahern.

### **Remarks at a Saint Patrick's Day Reception**

*March 16, 2001*

Thank you very much. It sounds like we invited some rowdy Irish-Americans.

[*Laughter*] Thank you all for coming. *Taoiseach*, thank you very much, sir. Secretary of State of Northern Ireland, Dr. Reid; First Minister Trimble; Deputy First Minister Mallon—thank you all for being here.

I want to thank the Ambassadors who are here. I want to thank the other leaders from Northern Ireland who are here. It's most gracious of you to take your time to come and celebrate Saint Patrick's Day with us. Mr. Speaker, it's good to see you again, sir, as well.

The *Taoiseach* and I just had an excellent meeting. We spent a good hour of frank dialog. He gave me Dublin's perspective on the peace process in Northern Ireland, just as Prime Minister Blair gave me London's perspective when we met last month. An Irish proverb tell us that a friend's eye is a good mirror. And I can tell you that what is striking about my meetings with both Prime Ministers is how similar their perspectives are, how optimistic they are, and how determined they are.

It is clear that all sides want the Good Friday agreement to succeed. It is also clear that all sides are seeking to overcome very difficult internal obstacles and to keep up forward momentum. The agreement negotiated by both Prime Ministers in Belfast last week is a reflection of a common commitment. As always, we deeply appreciate the efforts.

And again, I want to pledge what I said yesterday: The United States stands ready to help. It is in our national interest that there be a lasting peace, a real, lasting peace in Northern Ireland.

I also want to say how much I appreciate the contributions that Irish-Americans have made to the cause of peace. Many of you are right here in this room, and our Nation thanks you. By supporting those committed to a peaceful approach, you're truly giving something back to your native land.

Today is also about celebrating what Irish-Americans have given to their adopted land. The White House itself was designed by an Irish-American. This fact about America's home is symbolic of the contributions made by millions of Irish of both Catholic and Protestant persuasion.

Your industry and talent and imagination have enriched our commerce and enriched

our culture. The strong record of public service has fortified our democracy, and the strong ties to family and faith and community have strengthened our Nation's character. In short, the Irish are a big reason why we'll always be proud to call ourselves a nation of immigrants.

Happy Saint Patrick's Day.

And now, would you join us, please, for some refreshments in the State Room.

Welcome to the White House.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:38 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to United Kingdom Secretary of State for Northern Ireland John Reid; and First Minister David Trimble and Deputy First Minister Seamus Mallon, Northern Ireland Executive.

### **Message on the Observance of Saint Patrick's Day, 2001**

*March 16, 2001*

I am pleased to send warm greetings to those celebrating St. Patrick's Day. Each year on March 17, joyous events commemorate the remarkable life of Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland. Born in Britain many centuries ago, Patrick was captured as a teenager by pirates and sold into slavery in Ireland. During six years of forced labor as a herdsman, he looked to his religious faith for sustenance.

Patrick eventually escaped and returned to Britain, where he dreamed that he was being called to serve as a missionary. He began to study for the priesthood and returned to Ireland, dedicating his life to preaching Christianity. Patrick endured hardship and suffering, but his bravery and devotion to his faith became legendary in the hearts and minds of the Irish people.

Centuries later, St. Patrick's Day pays tribute to an incredible hero and to the rich cultural heritage of the Emerald Isle. Countless Americans symbolically proclaim Irish ancestry by taking part in the festivities celebrating the stories and traditions of Ireland. St. Patrick's Day is also a time to honor the contributions of Irish Americans to our Nation's history and way of life, enriching the United States in great measure.

As we move into the 21st century, Americans look forward to continued friendship and goodwill with the people of Ireland. Laura joins me in sending best wishes for a wonderful St. Patrick's Day.

**George W. Bush**

**Remarks to Small-Business Owners**  
*March 16, 2001*

Thank you all for coming. Be seated. [Laughter] Madame Secretary, thank you very much for the kind introduction. I want to welcome you all to the White House, the people's house. I can't tell you what an honor it is to live here. It's been a fantastic experience for me and Laura and our family, and we take our responsibilities seriously.

I want to welcome you. I want to welcome the entrepreneurs of America. First, I want to recognize Hector Baretto, who is the nominee for the Small Business Administration—Hector—and president of the Utah State Senate, Al Mansell, is here, as well. Al, thank you for coming.

Before I introduce the folks behind me, I'd like to say something about commonsense budgeting, something you get to do every day, something our Federal Government ought to do with your money. And that is, take a commonsense approach about what we do with the people's money. And it means setting priorities, understanding whose money it is we're spending. And the best way to do this is to say, what are our priorities?

Education is a priority, and we need to focus on education. But I also remember where I came from. It's one thing to spend money at the Federal level; it's another thing to make sure we understand how to achieve educational excellence for every child. And that means trusting local folks to chart the path to excellence. The people who care more about the children in a respective community are the people who live in the community. And so while we'll focus some Federal resources, we need to trust the local people by passing power out of Washington, DC, to run their public schools in America, and at the same time, we've got to insist upon results.

You do that every single day with your businesses. The Federal Government ought to start doing that, as well. And so we're going to say, "There's more money for you but show us whether or not children are learning to read and write and add and subtract. You measure, you show us so that not one single child gets left behind."

Another priority is the defense of the country. It's a solemn, solemn task of the President to keep the peace, which means we've got to prioritize spending in the military. And it starts with making sure we pay our troops more money. And so my budget says, there's more money for those who wear the uniform and better housing for those who wear the uniform and taking care of the veterans, for those who used to wear the uniform.

Another priority is health care. We've got a plan to take care of the working uninsured by refundable tax credits. We double the Medicare budget over a 10 year period of time. Another priority is to make sure that the Social Security system is safe and secure. And it starts with spending the Social Security money on only one thing—Social Security.

So this is a budget that I submitted that sets priorities. It increases what's called discretionary spending by 4 percent. That's enough to fund our priorities and keep our commitments without overburdening working folks and small-business owners. Now, part of the consternation here in Washington is that I don't want to spend as much money as they used to spend up here. By setting priorities and focusing and remembering whose money it is we're spending, I think we can slow the rate of growth down.

You see, at the end of last time, the last session, discretionary spending increased 8 percent. That's a lot, particularly when you're talking in terms of trillions. And so we've said, "Let's be responsible with the people's money. Let's focus, let's meet needs, but let's always remember whose money it is in the first place."

There is a lot of discussion about debt reduction, and that's a worthy discussion. The budget I submitted pays down \$2 trillion in debt. That's all the debt that's coming due over the next 10 years—that's \$2 trillion over

10 years. People say, "Why don't you pay down more?" And for those of you who have debt, long-term debt, know there is a cost to prepaying debt. And it doesn't make any sense to pay a premium to prepay debt with the people's money. That's not good fiscal policy. It doesn't bring any common sense to the budget.

But when we discuss debt, I also want Members of Congress to understand there is more than just Government debt. There is credit card debt that burdens working people. There is debt in the private sector. And it seems to make common sense to me that when we're planning what to do with the people's money that we not only pay debt at the national level, but we give people some of their own money back or don't take it in the first place, so they can manage their own debt, so that small businesses can manage their debt.

I set aside money in our budget over a 10 year period, the 10-year budget, for contingencies. So there is a trillion over 10 that's not spent, just in case something comes up. What I'm trying to do is to lay out exactly what we've got planned for the country. We increase discretionary spending by 4 percent. That's greater than the rate of inflation. That's greater than most people's paychecks have risen by. We pay down debt by \$2 trillion. We set aside a trillion debt of contingencies—I mean, \$1 trillion of contingency money. And the debate is, what to do with the rest, because, you see, incredibly enough, as a result of your hard work and the tax burden on the American people, there is still money left over. And so what do we do?

And by the way, before I tell you what I think we ought to do, I want you to know the assumptions in the plan are conservative assumptions. For example, over the 10 year period it is assumed our economy will grow at 3.2 percent. We can do better than that in America. We don't have to have such a pessimistic view of the productivity of the American people and the ingenuity of the entrepreneurs and the hard work of small-business people. We'll do better than that.

So I want to assure my fellow Americans that the assumptions in the budget are very conservative assumptions. After all, in the first 4 months of this year the cash flow com-

ing into our Treasury is \$40 billion more than anticipated. And it seems like to me that if you're collecting \$40 billion more than you thought, somebody is being overcharged.

And so we've submitted a plan to Congress to provide meaningful tax relief. Let me give you some of the principles of the plan. First, I don't believe in targeting tax cuts. I don't think the U.S. Congress ought to be able to pick and choose the winners in society. "You get the tax relief, and you don't get the tax relief." It makes sense that everybody who pays taxes, if we're going to have tax relief, ought to get tax relief. That's the fair way to do things.

We need to begin the process of making the code more simple. And a good place to start is to reduce the number of rates there are. So we shrink the rates from five to four and drop all rates. The Tax Code is very unfair to people at the bottom end of the economic ladder. If you're struggling to get ahead in America, say for example, you're a single mom, raising children, and you're at the \$22,000-a-year range, for every additional dollar you earn, the way this code is structured today, you pay a higher marginal rate on that dollar than someone who's making over \$200,000. As the lady who's struggling to get ahead, trying to put food on the table for her family, makes additional dollars over time—if you're a waitress, for example, working late at night—that additional dollar is taxed at a higher rate than someone making \$200,000. That's incredibly unfair, and it's certainly not what America's about, as far as I'm concerned.

America ought to be about rewarding hard work, not punishing hard work. And so we drop the bottom rate from 15 percent to 10 percent and increase the child credit from \$500 to \$1,000 per child. The code is not only unfair at penalizing people who live on the outskirts of poverty, the code also sends the wrong signal when it comes to marriage. And we have a marriage penalty in the Tax Code that we need to fix. And so my plan that I'm submitting to Congress does just that.

But I want to talk about two other aspects of the tax relief package that are very important and sometimes misunderstood. I strongly believe we need to drop the top rate from

39.6 to 33 percent. I've heard all the rhetoric about what that means, and so have you. But overlooked in the political hyperbole that tends to take place in our process is the fact that dropping the top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent serves as a stimulus to small-business growth in America.

The Treasury Department released a report earlier today on small-business owners who pay personal income taxes and small businesses which pay at the highest rate of 39.6. According to the Treasury Department, nationwide there are more than 17.4 million small-business owners and entrepreneurs who stand to benefit from dropping the top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent.

The role of Government is not to create wealth. The role of Government is to create an environment in which the entrepreneurial person in America who works hard and dreams big can realize his or her dreams. That's the role of Government.

I've got three folks standing up here that will serve as vivid examples of small-business folks from respective States. And I want to explain the impact of what dropping the top rate means in terms of the number of people, number of small businesses, who will be affected. Again, I repeat for America to hear: Most small businesses don't pay corporate taxes; most small businesses are sole proprietors or Subchapter S's. And their businesses are subject to personal income tax rates.

Patty Nathe of the State of Florida represents a State where there is one million small businesses and entrepreneurs who will benefit when we drop the top rate. Dennis Fugo from Ohio—Denise Fugo, who happens to be head of the National Restaurant Association, represents a State that has more than 630,000 small-business owners and entrepreneurs who will benefit. And Brad Drake from the State of South Dakota, an entrepreneur and small-business owner, represents a State with 55,000 small-business owners and entrepreneurs in a State who will benefit from dropping the top rate from 39.6 to 33 percent.

It is very important for Congress to hear from you. It is also important for Congress to understand the impact small businesses have on our economy and to always keep that in mind. If we want to have a strong economy

and a strong America, it is important to understand that small businesses generate 51 percent of the private sector GDP and that small businesses provide 75 percent of the net new jobs in America.

The small-business owner is incredibly important to the future of this country. And this tax relief plan is aimed at encouraging capital formation and capital growth in the small-business sector of America. And the Congress must understand that and must hear from you all.

The tax relief plan will increase cash flow of small businesses, giving folks more resources to buy more equipment and, as importantly, hire more workers. This tax relief plan gives people a chance from both political parties to send a clear signal that we are allies here in Washington of the small-business owner, not adversaries, that we encourage small business growth, that we understand the importance of the entrepreneur in the American economic sector.

And I hope as you all become involved in this process, that you help fight through the noise, the background chatter, the kind of political clutter that tends to fog the real issue. And the real issue is, how do we get money in the pockets of our entrepreneurs, after we meet basic obligations of Government, after we increase discretionary spending by 4 percent, and pay down taxes?

The fundamental debate is, what to do? And the apologists, those who don't stand on the side of the entrepreneur, want to say, "Use every excuse in the business to keep your money in Washington." They want to grow the size of Government. I don't. I want to grow the size of the private sector by giving you your money back.

And there's another debate that's taking place that affects you directly. And it's about the death tax. I don't think it's fair to tax a person's assets twice. I don't think it's fair for the small-business owner or the farmer or the rancher to work their life so they can pass their asset or their business on to a relative or a family member and have it taxed twice, once when you make the income and secondly after you die. I hope—I hope—that you stand with us, not only to make sure that the tax relief plan is fair, staying with us to

make sure that dropping that top rate—people hear what it does for the incredibly vital sector of America, the American economy, which is the small-business sector—but also stand with us in sending that message loud and clear, that we need to get rid of the death tax in the Tax Code.

I urge you to let your Senator know, or Senators know, what your opinion is. I believe you can have a big impact on how folks think up here. I certainly feel like we're making progress by reminding people of the practicalities of budgeting and the common-sense approach to what to do with your money.

But you need to let people know what they ought to be doing with your money, too. And a choice is—the choice is growing our economy or growing the Government. I just want to assure you that we've got ample money to meet our needs. And if we don't pass money back, I just know what's going to happen to it. It's going to be spent. *[Laughter]*

It's like the grandmother in Council Bluffs, Iowa, said during a speech. She said she has baked a lot of cookies in her day. And she's seen children and grandchildren come through her house. And every time she's left the cookies on the plate, they have been eaten. *[Laughter]* And that's how I view the budget process. *[Laughter]*

Finally, I want to urge you to be involved in your communities. I know you are in hiring people. But as entrepreneurs and concerned citizens, it's also important to be involved in your schools, to help fund and staff the programs that literally change America, one face at a time.

You see, the great strength of America are the people of our country, the dreamers and doers and people who can accomplish things. People not only figure out how to make a living by using their brain but also figure out how to make their neighborhoods better by following their hearts. I hope you sponsor mentoring programs, so that all children feel like somebody cares about them in our society. I hope you get involved with after-school programs, that may be sponsored by the Boys and Girls Clubs of America. The greatness of the country really, really exists because Americans care about our future.

There is a role for Government, but I understand how limited it is. I oftentimes tell people I wish I could sign the law that says we'll love each other like we'd like to loved ourself. That's not the role of Government. But it is the role of the President to lift the spirit of the country and to call upon the best. And the best are sitting right here. And I urge you to go back to your community and make a difference in somebody's life.

God bless you all, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:35 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Labor Elaine Lan Chao, who introduced the President.

## **Proclamation 7416—National Girl Scout Week, 2001**

*March 16, 2001*

*By the President of the United States of America*

### **A Proclamation**

This week marks the 89th anniversary of the founding of the Girl Scouts of the United States of America. Juliette Gordon Low founded the organization as a way to give girls greater opportunities to develop skills and to mentor them in knowledge and character. Promoting leadership and altruism, the Girl Scouts organization has played a unique and important role in preparing millions of girls to master challenges and to pursue dreams.

The Girl Scouts offers many ways for members to explore their interests and talents. With participation spanning five levels, girls ages 5 to 17 learn the importance of strong values as they strive to fulfill the highest ideals of good citizenship. The pure enjoyment of camping and other recreational activities is matched with lessons in compassionate caring for their neighbors.

Today, almost 3 million girls and more than 900,000 adult volunteers reap the benefits of involvement with this beloved and enduring organization. Guiding America's next generation of leaders, the Girl Scouts helps individuals to reach their full potential and builds a brighter future for our great Nation.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim March 11 through March 17, 2001, as National Girl Scout Week. I call on the people of the United States to observe the 89th anniversary of the Girl Scouts of the United States of America with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of March, in the year of our Lord two thousand one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fifth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., March 19, 2001]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on March 20.

---

## Digest of Other White House Announcements

---

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

---

### March 12

In the morning, the President traveled from Camp David, MD, to Panama City, FL, and in the afternoon, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate Paula J. Dobriansky to be Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs.

The President announced the designation of Dale Cabaniss as Chairman of the Federal Labor Relations Authority.

### March 13

In a morning ceremony in the Oval Office, the President received diplomatic credentials from Ambassadors Cyrille Oguin of Benin, Usha Jeetah of Mauritius, Yang Jiechi of China, Knut Vollebaek of Norway, Vygaudus Usackas of Lithuania, and Rostom Al-Zoubi of Syria.

The President announced his intention to nominate Roy A. Bernardi to be Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development for Community Planning and Development.

The President announced his intention to nominate William James Haynes to be General Counsel at the Department of Defense.

The President announced his intention to nominate Victoria Clarke to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs.

The President announced his intention to nominate Michael Chertoff to be Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division at the Department of Justice.

The White House announced that the President will meet with President Fernando de la Rúa of Argentina at the White House for a working visit on April 19.

### March 14

In the morning, the President traveled to Plainfield, NJ. In the afternoon, he traveled to East Brunswick, NJ, and later, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate Richard J. Egan to be Ambassador to Ireland.

The President announced his intention to nominate William Burns to be Assistant Secretary of State for the Near East.

The President announced his intention to nominate Lou Gallegos to be Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Administration.

The President announced his intention to nominate Powell A. Moore to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs.

The President announced his intention to nominate John Charles Weicher to be Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development and serve as Federal Housing Commissioner.

The White House announced that the President added the responsibility of leading the U.S. engagement in support of the Northern Ireland peace process to Richard Haass' February 6 nomination to be Director of Policy and Planning at the State Department.

### March 15

In the afternoon, the President met separately with World Boxing Association Heavyweight Champion Johnny Ruiz and National

PTA Phoebe Apperson Hearst Outstanding Educator Award winner Katha Black in the Oval Office.

The President announced his intention to nominate Gene Hickok to be Under Secretary of Education.

### **March 16**

In the afternoon, the President went to Camp David, MD.

The President announced his intention to nominate Samuel W. Bodman to be Deputy Secretary of Commerce.

The President announced his intention to nominate Ann Laine Combs to be Assistant Secretary of Labor.

The President announced his intention to nominate Kathleen B. Cooper to be Under Secretary of Commerce for Economic Affairs.

The White House announced that the President will meet with U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan at the White House on March 23.

The White House announced that the President will meet with King Juan Carlos I of Spain on March 28.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Quebec City, Canada, for the third Summit of the Americas on April 20–22.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Japan, South Korea, and China in October.

---

## **Nominations Submitted to the Senate**

---

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

---

### **Submitted March 13**

Theodore Bevery Olson, of the District of Columbia, to be Solicitor General of the United States, vice Seth Waxman, resigned.

Dov S. Zakheim, of Maryland, to be Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), vice William J. Lynn III.

### **Submitted March 15**

Kenneth I. Juster, of the District of Columbia, to be Under Secretary of Commerce for Export Administration, vice William Alan Reinsch, resigned.

---

## **Checklist of White House Press Releases**

---

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

---

### **Released March 13**

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Ari Fleischer

Statement by the Press Secretary: Argentine President To Visit Washington

### **Released March 15**

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Ari Fleischer

Statement by the Press Secretary: Appointment of the Counterintelligence Executive

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing the designation of Richard N. Haass to lead U.S. engagement in support of the Northern Ireland peace process

### **Released March 16**

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Statement by the Deputy Press Secretary: President's Attendance at Summit of the Americas

Statement by the Deputy Press Secretary: President's Travel to Asia

Statement by the Deputy Press Secretary: Visit by King Juan Carlos I of Spain



Statement by the Deputy Press Secretary:  
Visit by United Nations Secretary-General  
Kofi Annan

Announcement on the President's signing  
H.J. Res. 19 (Public Law No. 107-4)

sachusetts, as the "John Joseph Moakley  
United States Courthouse"

S. 279 / Public Law 107-3  
Affecting the representation of the majority  
and minority membership of the Senate  
Members of the Joint Economic Committee

---

**Acts Approved  
by the President**

---

***Approved March 13***

H.R. 559 / Public Law 107-2  
To designate the United States courthouse  
located at 1 Courthouse Way in Boston, Mas-

***Approved March 16***

H.J. Res. 19 / Public law 107-4  
Providing for the appointment of Walter E.  
Massey as a citizen regent of the Board of  
Regents of the Smithsonian Institution